

**CLAIMS**

1. A wound dressing material comprising a polymeric substrate, a silver salt, and a dyestuff to photostabilize the silver salt.

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2. A wound dressing material according to claim 1, wherein the substrate comprises a solid bioabsorbable material, preferably selected from the group consisting of collagens, oxidized celluloses, chitosans, galactomannans, glycosaminoglycans, and mixtures thereof

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3. A wound dressing material according to claim 2, wherein the substrate comprises a solid bioabsorbable material selected from the group consisting of collagens, oxidized celluloses, chitosans, and mixtures thereof.

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4. A wound dressing material according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is selected from the group consisting of celluloses, alginates, polyacrylates, polyurethanes, polyamides, and mixtures thereof.

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5. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the wound dressing material is in the form of a continuous solid sheet, an apertured solid sheet, a web, a woven fabric, a knitted fabric, a nonwoven fabric, a freeze-dried sponge or a solvent-dried sponge.

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6. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the polymeric substrate comprises an anionic polymer, and said silver salt comprises a salt of  $\text{Ag}^+$  with the anionic polymer.

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7. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the composition comprises from about 0.01wt.% to about 5wt.% of silver, based on the dry weight of the composition.

8. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the dyestuff comprises an antioxidant dyestuff, for example selected from the group

consisting of aniline dyes, acridine dyes, thionine dyes, bis-naphthalene dyes, thiazine dyes, azo dyes, anthraquinones, and mixtures thereof.

9. A wound dressing material according to claim 8, wherein the antioxidant dyestuff is selected from the group consisting of gentian violet, aniline blue, 5 methylene blue, crystal violet, acriflavine, 9-aminoacridine, acridine yellow, acridine orange, proflavin, quinacrine, brilliant green, trypan blue, trypan red, malachite green, azacrine, methyl violet, methyl orange, methyl yellow, ethyl violet, acid orange, acid yellow, acid blue, acid red, thioflavin, alphazurine, indigo blue, 10 methylene green, and mixtures thereof.

10. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the dyestuff is present in an amount of from about 0.2 to about 2wt.% based on the dry weight of the material.

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11. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the polymeric substrate consists essentially of a mixture of an oxidized cellulose with a collagen and/or a chitosan.

20 12. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the material is sterile and packaged in a microorganism-impermeable container.

13. A wound dressing material according to any preceding claim, wherein the material has a free radical activity in the diphenylpicrylhydrazyl (DPPH) test for 25 antioxidant activity as herein defined of at least about 15%.

14. Use of a material according to any one of claims 1 to 13 for the preparation of a medicament for the treatment of a wound.

30 15. Use according to claim 14, wherein the wound is a chronic wound, preferably selected from the group consisting of ulcers of venous ulcers, decubitus ulcers, or diabetic ulcers.

16. A method of manufacture of an antioxidant wound dressing material, comprising the steps of:

dyeing a polymeric substrate material with a dye which stabilizes silver salts against photochemical reduction; and

5       treating the substrate material with a silver salt dissolved or dispersed in water or an organic solvent.

17. A method according to claim 16 for the manufacture of a wound dressing material according to any of claims 1 to 13.

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18. A wound dressing comprising an antioxidant wound dressing material according to any of claims 1 to 13.

19. A wound dressing according to claim 18, wherein the material is sterile and  
15 packaged in a microorganism-impermeable container.